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TIME OF DECISION

The following is an extract from the lead article in *Theosophy*, August 1974. The quotes from H. P. Blavatsky are from her Messages to the American Conventions, in Letters No. 2 and No. 4.—Eds.

... In the closing pages of *The Key to Theosophy*, H.P.B. warned against the unfolding of psychic powers "in a hot-bed of selfishness and evil passions," and Mr. Judge, in one of his *Forum* answers (July, 1889), spoke of the seeds of sorcery sprouting in America. He explained why this was happening and to what it would lead:

Here the national characteristic is individualism, and that existing as a tendency of the nature will differentiate some day into individualism concentrated into some few men. Imagine this concentration as occurring in a future century when wonderful advances will have been made in knowledge of great forces in nature, and you can easily see without any need of prescience the future black magician.

Yet this was said of the same racial or karmic focus of population to whom H.P.B. addressed words of great encouragement:

But you in America. Your Karma as a nation has brought Theosophy home to you. The life of the Soul, the psychic side of nature, is open to many of you. The life of altruism is not so much a high ideal as a matter of practice. Naturally, then, Theosophy finds a home in many hearts and minds, and strikes a resounding harmony as soon as it reaches the ears of those who are ready to listen. There, then, is part of your work: to lift high the torch of Liberty of the Soul of Truth that all may see it and benefit by its light.

It seems evident that momentous moral decisions lie in the future for the American people, and for all those to whom perceptions of the nature of the cycle have given a sense of moral destiny. Already there are strong premonitions that we live in a time of choice. Ours is no longer an attractive world, and except for those few who belong to an heroic breed, the future does not beckon with inviting prospects. Alienation and anomie are clichés of criticism, while self-indulgence competes with rebellion in claims on the psychic resources of a generation. Already street clinics are over-crowded with young people—hardly more than children—who seek escape from drugs or disease, and there is little in the culture to give them enduring help through means to self-understanding and self-reliance. The dreadful wars of the mid-twentieth century have taken their toll, seeming almost timed to strike at the flower of each succeeding generation, and meanwhile the national scene at home seems singularly devoid of inspiring examples.

Few can be immune to the pull of weakening tendencies which cross community and family lines, moving as a penetrating atmosphere, even as a fog creeps into every corner of a landscape. But the danger is not so much from the influence of a psycho-astral miasma as in the vulnerabilities of individual habits and states of mind. The reflexes of self-interest give access to infection. The young who bring heart-break and disappointment to a bewildered parental generation have been taught little reason to think of anything but

themselves and their desires and impulses. The country has been too long without a call to higher duty, to ennobling obligation. And so it is that habitual response to cravings, appetites, and the entire gamut of psychic attractions has become a kind of second nature. When H.P.B. spoke of a "hotbed of selfishness," there was no exaggeration in the phrase, nor in her depiction of the consequences that would come when these uncontrolled tendencies were unleashed. It was just that foresight, based on knowledge of cycles, bringing also the promise of high opportunities, which made her cry out to those who would listen:

Theosophy first, and Theosophy last; for its *practical* realization alone can save the Western world from that selfish and unbrotherly feeling that now divides race from race, one nation from another; and from that hatred of class and social considerations that are the curse and disgrace of so-called Christian peoples. Theosophy alone can save it from sinking entirely into that mere luxurious materialism in which it will decay and putrefy as civilizations have done. In your hands, brothers, is placed in trust the welfare of the coming century; and great as is the trust, so great is also the responsibility.

... Students of Theosophy revere and follow H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge as teachers by reason of their profound knowledge of philosophy, their insight into human need, and their unceasing efforts to spread the light of understanding to others. It is this common symmetry of wisdom and devotion to others which inspires the student with the conviction that truth can be found, and that it will make us freer, better, more useful human beings. And since they are accepted as Teachers, it is the course of gratitude and devotion to preserve as well as we can the symmetry of their work, while endeavoring to carry it on. An all-pervading altruism is the balance-principle of this symmetry.

THE UNITY OF OUR MOVEMENT

BORIS DE ZIRKOFF

The unity of the Theosophical Movement is not determined by any organizational structure in which any single authoritative body holds hegemony over other groups and dictates to them their policies. The unity of the Movement is a totally spiritual factor which inheres in a similarity of aims, objectives and long-range plans, and derives its power from the basic precepts of the Ancient Wisdom and the common endeavor to implement at least some of them in one's daily life.

To realize that the Universe we live in is a manifestation of the One Life, nameless and undefinable; that all living things, both great and small, both visible and invisible, are bound together by unbreakable ties and evolve together towards a nobler and grander condition; that the outward world is but an imperfect image of inner realities which can be known by aspiration and training; that every one of us is the result of what we have thought, felt and done in

many previous lives; that we are the creators of our own future and the arbiters of our own fate; that evolution in its cyclic progress is universal and without beginning or end; and that the only truly scientific way to live and act is in accordance with universal laws—these and other convictions and ideals are the foundation upon which rests the spiritual unity of the men and women who are—organizationally or otherwise—an integral part of the Theosophical Movement. Their temporary adherence to any particular society or group, or their special devotion to any particular individual for whom they may have a special reverence, while excellent in themselves, do not constitute the enduring oneness of aspiration or the strength of conviction in the spiritual nature of the Universe which are the basis of their beliefs and their lives.

In all ages and eras of which we have historical records, any spiritual movement revitalizing among men age-old ideals and often forgotten knowledge, became eventually surrounded, and, at least to some degree, affected by a multiplicity of offshoots, reflecting but feebly the central knowledge, and largely mixed up with various types of wishful thinking, psychic visions, worldly ambitions and other distortions. For us to imagine that the situation has radically changed today, is to give way to phantasies utterly unrelated to the sober facts of life. The twentieth century and our Movement now are not much different from the era of the early Gnostic Schools and the confused outward world in which they originated, grew and spread.

What is of paramount importance is to *preserve*—unaltered and undiluted—in the midst of this variegated stage-setting, face to face with the many curious variations upon the main theme, the original teachings as brought forward mainly by H. P. Blavatsky, so that they may serve at all times as a touchstone to appraise the value and worth of other ideas and concepts appearing from time to time upon the stage of world thought.

—Reprinted from *Theosophia*, Fall, 1974

UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THE DIVINITY OF MAN

Extract from Theosophical Manual No. 1, just off the press, *What is Theosophy?: a General View of Occult Doctrine*, by Charles J. Ryan.

Theosophy does not teach that Brotherhood depends upon external conditions—social, political or even intellectual. Its root lies in the order of Nature, in the organic unity of the human race, physically, and above all, spiritually. Universal Brotherhood is not something to be constructed; mankind is really a great family, and it is only our blindness that prevents us from recognizing this and acting accordingly. Mankind is an organism; *men* are its constituent cells, and what injures one hurts all. Theosophy shows that the recognition of this in the life of each individual—with *all that it implies*—is the only basis on which a true civilization can be built.

The Brotherhood of Man, therefore, is not a sentimental theory, framed to ameliorate stern realities; it is a fact in Nature, and Nature will ultimately compel us to accept it, even if it takes ages of suffering to bring it about. Theosophy

calls to all men of goodwill to discover for themselves that the fundamental law of the Universe is Love and Harmony, and that he who breaks it is swimming against the stream.

The Inner Man knows this, and tries to enlighten the outer personality that we mistakenly think is our Real Self. We can hasten our evolution by opening our hearts; our destiny is in our own hands, and from Theosophy we can learn how to make it a conscious working with the Divine Intelligence in the Universe.

"BORN THEOSOPHISTS"

H. P. Blavatsky not infrequently points out in indirect fashion in her great works the real reason why teachings such as this [that man is a ray as it were of the Cosmic Consciousness] do not meet with immediate acceptance on the part of averagely intelligent men. This reason is a simple one. Men simply won't believe, paradoxical as it may sound, that they themselves are what they are in their highest part, so great and so grand; they simply will not believe in their own spiritual and divine attributes, and not believing they reject.

But all men are not blinded by mis-education and prejudice after this manner. The human race contains a relatively large number of men and women whose strong intuitional power enables them, at least partially, to see through the veils and clouds built up around their consciousness by prejudice and miseducation, and therefore to see or to glimpse the Glorious Vision. These latter are the ones whom we call 'born Theosophists,' for the Theosophist is by no means merely one who signs an application-blank entitling him to membership in the Theosophical Movement; nor one who has merely a more or less formal intellectual acquaintance with the Theosophical teachings; but the true Theosophist is, above everything else, one who has to some extent the inner vision, and having the inner vision, 'lives the life.'

—G. de Purucker:

H. P. Blavatsky: the Mystery, Ch. XIII, p. 123

THE GREATEST ADVENTURE OF ALL

Truth is primarily learnt through life and experience; but the maps or instructions can be found in many esoteric schools. I believe that Masonry embodies one of the purest systems in the world today. I would like to think of this world-wide network as a great electrical system through which the Power will increasingly cause man to know the good, the true, and the beautiful.

It seems to me that this truth, this light or kingdom within, is basically what we all seek, and is a state of consciousness to which we can attain. Through contemplation, self-knowledge, and work on ourselves we can find an intuitive center within where we can be at peace. People talk glibly about mind over matter and will-power. But what mind and whose will? The important thing is that spirit manifests *through* matter. They must harmonize. We must be friends with ourselves. Our physical bodies are therefore an essential part of the process. Otherwise, why are we here? Is it coincidence that parts of the body are called temple, solar plexus, heart and sacrum? Is it not possible

that the haloes of Saints, painted by early Christian artists, were known to exist, albeit invisible to most of us? What I am suggesting is that this light can be truly experienced, not just metaphorically but literally.

There are no short cuts. No one can exactly follow the footsteps of another. Each must find his or her own way. We must start from where we are, know what we are, and where we are going, which is not as simple as it sounds. Though we scale the heights we must plumb the depths, and where the *vertical* crosses the *horizontal* of everyday life we have the center of the cross.

This quest, this greatest of all adventures is not without its dangers and difficulties, but seems to me to be the answer to the despairing cry of the age—"What can I do?" We are all cells in the body of humanity, and the one affects the whole, as the whole affects the one.

—*Extracts from a talk given at a
Masonic Study Circle.*

NEW LIGHT ON OLD TRUTHS

ELSA-BRITA TITCHENELL

Astronomers are today faced with some curious new facts, as the moonrocks brought back to earth by astronauts are being studied. These rocks and data transmitted by instruments left on the moon show mystifying characteristics at variance with current cosmological theories.

In an article in the March 1974 issue of *Physics Today*, Dr. Don L. Anderson of the California Institute of Technology writes:

This strange body is like no other in the solar system that we know about, either presently orbiting the Sun or having fallen on the Earth. It is similar to no planet or meteorite.

... As a result of the Apollo program we know that the lunar crust is much older than we had suspected, but the interior temperature remains a puzzle, as does the problem of the Moon's origin.

... Both the internal structure and exterior morphology were apparently the result of an extensive early history of activity.

... The Moon, unlike the Earth, has been remarkably quiescent for the last 3×10^9 years.

... How may we explain the early high-temperature history of the Moon and at the same time its rapid death as an active body?

If the moon died three billion years ago, this uses up a sizable slice of the scientifically allowed life period of our solar system. Further, Dr. Anderson notes that the moon is deficient in iron, which is abundant in the other planets, as well as in "all elements and compounds more volatile than iron," while "the abundance of titanium in the returned lunar samples was one of the first surprises of the Apollo program." As the surface of the moon is rich in large-ion elements, refractory material, it is assumed that the volatile elements must exist in its interior:

In a cooling-nebula model of planetary formation, the refractories condense before the volatiles and it was therefore proposed that the Moon was made inside out!

—*ibid.*

The evidence of the moon's great age and early activity corroborates the theosophical teachings. According to ancient esoteric astronomy, the visible moon is what remains of the 'eidolon,' the 'astral' or model-body of a former planet, whose physical body was of a far more dense and material substance than any we can perceive. Unless indeed the moon was "made inside out," its interior may well

contain even more massive elements than those on the surface.

Man regards his share of space through the narrow slit provided by his senses and through the slightly broader gash his instruments have sliced in nature's veil, all unaware of worlds more dense or more ethereal: matter in motion, on the one hand, slower than our radio-waves; on the other, more rapid than X-ray radiation. 'Above' and 'below' the narrow range we sense, there must be unbroken continuity of modes of motion, rhythms of life extending infinitely, both superior and inferior to our known world; majestic pulsebeats of infinitely long duration; vibrations so rapid as to be dwarfed by the rotation of an electron. Consciousness knows no size.

The sacred writings of old on what is known today as Theosophy contain records of terrestrial and cosmological events. Our rocky sphere is regarded as a vortex of forces, minute charged particles of energy. In this scheme every blade of grass, every rock, every human shape, is such a vortex of atomic lives contained within the larger ecosphere. Each is a unit as well, giving due expression to its own monadic consciousness-center, while comprising innumerable molecular and atomic lives embodying consciousnesses of their kind. Midway between molecule and galaxy; between the elemental forces and the gods, stands man, a corpuscle in one of the rivers of lives that circulate through the cosmos. This ageless science knows of no empty space.

Each mathematical point in infinity manifests its own representative characteristic of universal life. On the unseen planes, vortices of forces far removed from the gamut we know, other globes, must manifest forth substances embodying lives fitted for their existence, conscious beings on other rungs of the Jacob's ladder where we earth-beings occupy a single tread. Throughout the endless whole evolve the energetic centers that periodically issue from their hierarchic divinity, assume their many forms, and cyclically merge once more with their own divine parent. The planes of substance whereon these lives find form contain *laya-centers* ('centers of dissolution'), singular points where the rivers flow from one plane into another. This has been suspected by some scientists, who are studying the mystery of black holes, where matter appears to be sucked into a state of nonexistence by gravitational centers so powerful that not even light can escape—hence invisible. In the periodical *Mercury*, published by the Astronomical Society of the Pacific, William J. Kaufmann III writes in the March-June 1974 issue on "Entering a black hole and emerging into another space and another time; travel from one universe to another; a possible breakdown in the laws of physics. . . ." The well-known phenomenon Cygnus X-1 has been the subject of much speculation. This source of X-ray emission appears to be cannibalizing its neighbor, absorbing the substance of its associate. It may well be such a 'laya-center.'

Many so-called myths contain accounts of worlds or spheres occupying unseen planes of substance, being in fact formed of the material belonging to such planes. The fact that such planes and unseen worlds do not enter into the area studied by astrophysics, plus the theories that man has but recently emerged as a thinking being capable of knowledge, are largely to blame for mythology being regarded purely as fiction. Yet many of the scriptures of unknown

origin may have a great deal to contribute to science even today. As an instance, the Edda of Iceland enumerates twelve worlds and planes together with their ruling 'gods' or governing qualities. Valhalla, for example, occupies the plane named Gladhome, while our own globe appears to belong to the plane called Trym-home, or the home of Trym, the 'giant' who represents our gross matter.

A good deal of credit must be given to radio astronomy, which has become a respectable science in its own right during this century, in spite of being a study of invisible sources of radiation. It is fulfilling a prophecy made in 1882: "Science will hear sounds from certain planets before she sees them."*

In her writings, H. P. Blavatsky gives an account of the intricate cycles of cosmic activity and rest and explains the role played by the moon in our solar system. Our visible earth is accompanied by six (or more, according to the method of calculation) invisible companion globes all of which are disposed on and composed of four planes of matter, our own being the lowest of these four. The whole forms a coherent entity, a 'chain' of globes, three 'descending' progressively into our type of matter and reaching their material culmination in our fourth sphere; three 'ascending' progressively in spirituality. Each globe of a pair occupying the same plane would be cognizant of the other, but having different functions. (One wonders how many binary stars known to astronomy may stand in this relationship to each other.) We learn that the moon-chain died and that the energies which activated it have since been gradually transferring their forces to the chain of globes we now inhabit, and of which we are a part. The visible moon is still transmitting its substance to the physical earth. It is interesting to note the recent discovery that the lunar crust varies considerably in thickness, the side facing the earth being worn thin, exposing basalt maria, whereas the far side bulges with a thicker crustal structure, causing a 2 km offset of the moon's center of mass. Thomas C. Van Flandern of the U. S. Naval Observatory is working on a theory that gravity is decreasing, according to an article in *Science News* for August 24 and 31, 1974:

He finds a deceleration of the moon's motion that is twice what would be expected from the action and reaction of tides on the earth and the moon, and says the best interpretation of the excess is as a result of change in the value of the gravitational constant.

Perhaps. Or the moon's mass is being gradually depleted. The ancient wisdom sees gravity as a form of electromagnetic attraction, whose equivalent force is that of repulsion. These two forces manifest throughout all forms of conscious life, being in the human kingdom expressed as love and hate. This is a natural corollary to the idea that there is no dead matter in any form of manifestation. A compound dies when its inherent hierarch withdraws, but the components continue to manifest and withdraw according to their own time-cycles.

As time goes on, more and more corroborative evidence emerges. While scientific *theory* frequently diverges from the ideas embodied in scripture and myth, scientific *fact* increasingly vindicates the wisdom of the ancient world.

—Reprinted from *Sunrise*, November 1974.

**The Mahatma Letters*, p. 170.

HIGHER OCTAVES OF LIGHT

JOY MILLS

November 17, 1974, the 99th anniversary of the founding of the Theosophical Society, saw the opening of the first semester in Seminar Studies in Theosophy held at Adyar, India. These seminars are under the direction of the International Vice-President, Miss Joy Mills. Her opening address appears in the December 1974 issue of *The Theosophist*, and in *The American Theosophist*, January 1975, paragraphs from which are here quoted since they sound so clearly and well a note of supreme importance that should be heard in all theosophical study, especially in group-study. Above all, her words point to those "higher octaves of light" we should all aspire towards.—Eds.

Reaffirming the ideals enunciated for its two predecessor institutions and recalling the educational objectives which have underlain the Society's work from its inception, the Seminary Studies program will encourage its participants in the individual pursuit of truth through an encounter—a direct and personal encounter—with the Wisdom-Tradition known as Theosophy. A comprehensive understanding of the fundamental principles of the theosophical philosophy is viewed as essential before the student can proceed to the application of those principles in his own life and to the situations and conditions in the whole world about him. Each participant in the Seminar must become a genuine student, therefore, and not merely a listener to the opinions or knowledge of another. His listening must be to the Immortal Self within, as he seeks to awaken and keep alive his spiritual intuitions, to expand his consciousness from the center and so to view all life from that higher vantage point. The Seminar should be a gateway leading to that Self-Discovery which is Self-Realization, the key to illumination and the only true foundation for compassionate service.

When Lt. Commander Richard E. Byrd first crossed the North Pole by air, he was asked what were his thoughts on that occasion. "I thought of the infinitesimal proportions of modern man," Byrd responded, "of the frailty of the atoms that occupy the spaces, of the limitations of those who have taken over the conduct of civilization. I caught for the first time, as in a flash of understanding, the inadequate results of the effort to solve not the enigmas of space and duration, but the problems of mankind. At any point of the earth's circumference, at a given elevation, human vision encounters its limitations." It is to the problems of mankind that we must address ourselves, and for that task we must expand the scope of human vision. If we focus solely on the major problems of our day—the problems of violence, cruelty, pollution, poverty, etc.—we shall have missed our central obligation, I submit; the focus that is necessary centers on man himself, for when man perceives himself truly, he no longer projects into the world about him the diseases which really lie within. The scope of human vision is enlarged not so much by adding something to the field of vision, but by deleting from the field all unnecessary elements. Thus the eye, which is the organ of vision, is trained to focus in order to perceive. In the greater vision of the spirit, the power to focus is achieved by bringing all the elements into a proper relationship, which is the essence of the focusing process. The sun's familiar light is all about us and floods our world to the full; our reception of it depends upon the

focus of our organ of perception, the eye. So the higher octaves of light, of wisdom and illumined thought, are also all about us, but their entry into human consciousness is through a door that must be opened by man within himself.

READER'S NOTEBOOK

Healthy joy is basically good. During the golden age of Spanish literature one of the three great—Lope, Tirso, or Calderón—gave a magnificent definition of good and evil, explaining that good is what is made with joy and that there can be no joy in evil. (There could be devilish pleasure, but no true joy.)

Sour souls there are that condemn joy as something unbecoming to the academic rigidity of intellectual pigmies. Such unfortunates possess as much esthetic development as a horse, and a vinegar disposition the very opposite of joy. To understand what is joy, what can truly be called joy, one must study it. Joy is an inner condition (hence its excellence); it is a disposition of serene gentleness and happiness. It is an eternal good humor that helps to understand, to feel with and to tolerate. The somber people who sometimes call themselves 'serious' evoke my pity.

The singular quality of laughter, which is the outer expression of joy, springs from humorous situations. What is the most common cause of these situations? Man himself. We don't laugh at an animal; we laugh at human beings. But we should remind ourselves that the only condition for human ridicule to be a legitimate cause of laughter is that it be impersonal.

Joy is a magnificent ingredient of the positive aftermath of physical death. For all these reasons I try to identify myself with joy. When I identify myself with pain or sorrow it is solely to offer consolation.

—Emilio Sandoval Brés

SEND IN YOUR QUESTIONS

QUESTION—I have just received and begun to read *The Mahatma Letters* and am a little set back by something I came across in Letter No. 16, page 105, written by the Master K.H., as follows:

"Another fine example of the habitual disorder in which Mrs. H.P.B.'s mental furniture is kept. She talks of 'Bardo' and does not even say to her readers what it means. As in her writing-room confusion is tentimes confounded, so in her mind are crowded ideas piled in such a chaos that when she wants to express them the tail peeps out before the head."

How can the Master K.H. speak in such a way about H.P.B., the vehicle the Masters themselves selected to make known to the world the Divine Wisdom? I might be taking this out of context, but it came as quite a shock when I read it. It baffles me and I'd be grateful for an explanation.

—J.B.

IRENE R. PONSONBY—This is a natural reaction for a student of Theosophy, imbued with reverence for H. P. Blavatsky, on

first reading *The Mahatma Letters*. These Letters are powerful wine for any reader.

An understanding of Master K.H.'s comment lies in a knowledge of the relationship between a spiritual teacher and his pupil—a unique bond of complete trust, confidence, and devotion, enhanced in H.P.B.'s case by a still greater tie of a mystic nature (see pp. 203-4, *The Mahatma Letters*). In such a relationship no question of insult or injury can possibly exist.

The Masters, representing the Great White Lodge, are the source and court of last appeal for teachings given by their Messenger. And what is the tenor of the Master's comment? There is no condemnation in his words. Surely they express a kindly and humorous explanation of an omission on H.P.B.'s part which he corrects. H.P.B. was ever ready to acknowledge her own shortcomings. Is it not fair to presume she was grateful to Master K.H. for his explanation and clarification of the confusion due to her error? Mental confusion is no crime but a common failing, and H.P.B. was very human.

The Master tells us (pp. 9-10), *op. cit.* H.P.B. was "the best available" when, after prolonged search, they sought a Messenger to send to the West. What a magnificent "best" she proved to be! Nor can there be any doubt about the gratitude and appreciation of the Masters for their "visible agent."

MEDITATION

Meditation is really a pure and natural state in which the mind is silent. When the mind is calm and still there is the blessing of true happiness, the beauty of divine radiation. Meditation is not the creation of the mind; it is something higher which elevates the mind to the spiritual plane. The beauty of meditation consists in comprehending the complexities of mind, and this clarity or illumination is the proper channel for communicating with the spiritual center, and to live in this center of spiritual liberation one must be in meditation. Meditative awareness makes us to receive the richness of divine grace which brings refreshment and renewal of life. To be in the supreme state of super-consciousness is the bliss of meditation.

—K. M. P. Mohamed Cassim, Ph.D.,
Founder, Perfect Peace Lodge,
Veyangoda, Ceylon

WRITINGS OF WILLIAM QUAN JUDGE

Point Loma Publications is pleased to announce the publication later this year of the first volume of the writings of William Q. Judge. The publishing of this, and two succeeding volumes, is made possible by a contribution received for this specific project.

Mr. Judge needs no introduction to theosophical students, for whom his wise and practical words for over three quarters of a century have been a source of strength and inspiration to aspirants on "the Path". That same counseling—which relates the deepest esotericism to performance of duty and responsibility in daily life—is today's great need and, we feel, will be welcomed by a ready and eager public.

BOOK REVIEWS

H. P. Blavatsky: the Mystery by Gottfried de Purucker, in collaboration with Katherine Tingley. Published 1974 by Point Loma Publications, Inc., San Diego, California, Paper, xviii + 242 pp. Price \$4.95.

An editorial foreword to this book declares: "The world is more ready to understand Helena Petrovna Blavatsky now than it was forty years ago when this book first appeared serially in *The Theosophical Path*." Agreed, but it is surely a work that would have been well used by the Theosophical community during that time. Personally, I would rather have this one book on my library shelf than a hundred or more less worthy works that have been published with a Theosophical imprint in the past forty years.

Better late than never. Now that it is available in book form no doubt it will be welcomed and increasingly called for by students of Theosophy and all others who seek to unfathom the mystery that was H. P. Blavatsky.

Those looking for a biography will not find it here save for a few notes appended at the end by the editors. Instead, they will be treated to a first-class exposition of the principal Theosophical concepts, including cycles, the constitution of man, the destiny of humanity, evolution, karma and reincarnation. Only against such a background can the 'mystery' be even hinted at.

The brilliance of Dr. de Purucker's scheme staggers the imagination. This is a real *Theosophical* biography. It is largely devoid of personality references. The reader is given assistance to understand what lies behind the veil of the mystery, but of course only he—or she—can lift that veil. From these pages one receives the impression of greatness but must judge for oneself what degree of that quality was possessed by the subject. It must be obvious that those worthy of the mantle described herein must be few and far between. Whom else does it fit?

I hesitate to pick out one or two chapters from the many because we are asked to consider a system rather than its several separate parts. However, those dealing with "The Great Sages and Seers" struck me as being exceptionally helpful in unravelling the delicate threads that usually bind this subject. As sketched in these chapters, the 'mystery' stands out in clear perspective, and her relationship to those she served can perhaps be better understood.

Many thanks to the publishers. This was worth waiting for.

—TED G. DAVY, Reprinted from
The Canadian Theosophist, Jan.-Feb. 1975

The Mahatmas and Genuine Occultism by G. de Purucker; Point Loma Publications, Inc., 1972; 73 pages, \$1.50.

Nowadays Occultism is a word that is having its heyday, so it is good to find a booklet that treats on the genuine article and to be told that, if one wishes to find true Occultism, one must live a noble life in order to acquire it. "Occultism is the most serious and important branch of human knowledge," states the author, and adds: "it is the science of the things that are causal."

A difference between pseudo and genuine occultists is pointed out: the former hanker after the weird and mys-

terious and, in fact, are involved in the psychological ruminations of their own minds. On the other hand, genuine occultists study Nature's fundamental structure, operations, and laws. True occultists (in the sense referred to by the author) proclaim spiritual truths and uplifting teachings: Gautama Buddha, Jesus Christ, Lao-Tse, Krishna, Pythagoras, Empedocles, Apollonius of Tyana. Furthermore, it is stated that genuine occultists still exist. That they labor for the betterment of humanity is instanced by Dr. de Purucker when he refers to the Occult Brotherhood composed of the Elder Brothers, as they are termed. And he further states that they sent H. P. Blavatsky to the Western world. "H. P. Blavatsky was a genuine Occultist indeed, the Envoy of the Great Ones, as others have been before her. She brought the teachings of the age-old Wisdom-Religion anew to mankind."

This theme is continued in the chapter devoted to "The Secret Doctrine of the Ages" and Dr. de Purucker declares: "When I speak of the Archaic Doctrine, the Wisdom-Religion of Mankind, the Secret Doctrine of the Ages, I am speaking of that 'Lost Word,' which yet is not a word, but a system of teaching, a Wisdom."

There is a chapter on "The Teachings of the Mahatmas" considered under sectional headings: "What is the Pathway?"; "Inner Worlds"; "Our evolutionary Journey"; "The Music of the Spheres." All such uplifting ideas should be considered in connection with genuine Occultism. Dr. de Purucker discusses the nature of the Mahatmas, the Mystery Schools, Initiation, and the sacred rites which have come down to us as our present-day religious festivals.

In connection with the rites of initiation and the unfolding of inner potencies which were brought forth thereby and demonstrated by the initiants, one passage may be quoted:

"There is a strange and mysterious energy in man, which few men consciously know anything about, and in connection with this there is a secret and wonderful key which enables him to unloose, to unlock so to say, the chains which bind him into the gross psycho-astral physical encasement. There is this key by which to unlock the lock which shuts this inner man in; and when the inner man is thus loosed or unlocked, he can go forth into the inner realms of being, into the secret and invisible places of space."

—GEOFFREY A. BARBORKA, Reprinted from
The American Theosophist, Feb. 1975

The Doctrine of Karma: Chance or Justice? by Gertrude W. van Pelt, M.D., Point Loma Publications, Inc. Paper, 64 pp. \$1.75.

This, No. 3, of a series of twelve manuals outlining the fundamentals of Occult Doctrine, is about that universal law called Karma.

The word is in your dictionary; but more than a dictionary definition is needed to grasp the powerful philosophy packed in those five letters. To understand the full doctrine is to broaden and deepen your vision, to give meaning and significance to every act you perform, to completely re-form your life.

No wonder H. P. Blavatsky called Karma the 'ultimate

Law'. In its majestic sweep universes and man are subject to its impersonal action. Fundamentally we ourselves produce our own karma. We reap the perfect consequences of our own thought and deed.

Writes Dr. van Pelt: "It is said that the gods never interfere with karma. They could not. Learning beings must be free to work out their own destiny, which means that their mistakes recoil upon themselves; for it is thus that they learn. Men themselves decide their fate by their choice of the various alternatives which life presents, while karmic agents execute what man has decreed."

The author explains individual karma, national and racial karma, and global karma. She elucidates the philosophy inherent in the idea of karma and explains why karma is not fatalism, why it is not punishment, why also it is not a blind force. An important chapter traces the benefits that all humanity would reap if the teaching of karma would be universally accepted.

"An honest and whole-hearted belief in the law of karma in its relation to life as a whole," she declares, "would alone completely change the character of our civilization."

The publishers are to be congratulated in their effort to produce this series outlining the essential ideas of Theosophy. From what we have read so far, the authors have not wandered from the original teaching and have explained its many intricate facets with practical and stimulative illustration. We look forward to the publication of the complete set soon.

—H. PENDARVIS

BOOKS RECEIVED

The Esoteric Substance of Voltairian Thought by Denise Bonhomme, Philosophical Library, Inc. New York, \$15.00 (to be reviewed later).

The Key to the Sciences of Man: The "Impossible Relativity of Value Reactions" by D. G. Garan, Ph.D., J.U.D., LL.D., Philosophical Library, Inc. New York, \$10.00 (to be reviewed later).

Sacred Sex edited by Thomas R. White and the Editors of 24 Magazine, Strength Books, East Ridge Press, Hanks, N.Y.

COMMENT FROM HOLLAND ON "H. P. BLAVATSKY, THE MYSTERY"

The following is a quotation from a review of *H. P. Blavatsky, the Mystery* by G. de Purucker, written by Professor J. H. Dubbink in *Theosofia*, Jan.-Feb. 1974 (published by the Dutch Section of the T.S., Adyar).—Eds.

This really is a book that should be translated, if only in connection with the centenary of the Theosophical Movement. [A translation by Arien Smit is currently appearing in *Levende Gedachten*, Rotterdam, Holland, as reported in *Eclectic* No. 26]. The editors are rightly of opinion that "the world is more ready to understand H.P.B. now than it was fifty years ago." They have published in one volume a series of articles that appeared in *The Theosophical Path* between the years 1920-1930. This procedure has a drawback which proves to be an advantage. In a series of articles the

reader will naturally find repetitions, which are to ensure the oneness of the collection. Well, these clever repetitions, which are often in the nature of variations, now make the book suitable reading for those who like to form an opinion on both the person and work of H.P.B.—for these matters are elucidated by reference to a few basic tenets of the Secret Doctrine. Thus the attentive reader obtains a good introduction to H.P.B.'s work and person, as well as to the ideas underlying Theosophy. In a translation the references to scientific theories of the older period could easily be replaced by contemporaneous ones, which would fit quite well.

This book is also important as a sign of the rapprochement between the various theosophical groupings: the back of the book has an announcement of the publication of the *Collected Writings of H.P.B.* issued by the Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Adyar and London.

[Prof. Dubbink ends his review by quoting the closing words of the book, as follows:]

And so we come to an end of this true story of a great psychological mystery, the biography of a soul rather than the outline of the life of a mere human personality. And in doing so, inevitably we have also presented a sketch of the essential teachings H. P. Blavatsky brought. In the greatest of her works, *The Secret Doctrine*, all that has been heretofore outlined in this present book is there contained, either in brief or in much fuller form than the compass of this volume permits. The true Theosophist loves his great first Teacher, with a love that is based on sound reasons and in no wise is dependent upon a merely personal predilection for one whose mental capacities and whose instincts of the heart provoked admiration. Not only did H. P. Blavatsky teach men how to know themselves, whence they came, what they are, and whither they are going, but she gave them new hopes in life, for she taught them a new meaning of Life, in elucidating the marvelous Wisdom-Religion of the archaic ages.

What work can be more sublime than giving back to man man's soul? And this in brief is precisely what the Great Theosophist, H. P. Blavatsky, did.

"WILLIAM Q. JUDGE SERIES"

The Theosophy Company (245 W. 33rd St., Los Angeles, Ca. 90007) has issued Pamphlets No. 3 and 4 of their "William Q. Judge Series" (50c each). No. 3 contains these important and timely articles: "The Theosophical Movement", "One Sign of the Cycle", "On the Future: a Few Reflections", "Organized Life of the Theosophical Society" (address given at the Theosophical Congress at the Parliament of Religions World's Fair, Chicago, 1893), "The Future and the Theosophical Society", "Seventeen Years Ago and Now", and "The Closing Cycle". The last article is from the (*Irish Theosophist*, January 1895); others are reprinted from *The Path*.

Articles in Series No. 4 are: "Theosophical Study and Work", "The Path", "What Our Society Needs Most", "What the Masters Have Said", "Dogmatism in Theosophy", "Closed or Open Lodges", "Each Member a Center", "Methods of Theosophical Work", "Hypocrisy or Ignorance", "Cautions in Paragraphs", "Theosophical Don'ts"—all from *The Path* in the years 1886-1894, except the first article which is an Aryan Branch Paper, Nov. 1890.

The United Lodge continues also its series of articles by H. P. Blavatsky. To quote from the editors' Foreword in a brochure just received:

"In this collection of articles chosen from her contributions to the *Theosophist* and *Lucifer*, H.P.B. turns her prac-

ticed pen and penetrating mind to two familiar themes—one, the clear traces of the continuity of the ancient teachings of the Wisdom Religion among peoples who have remained historical mysteries to the West; and, two, the modern obliteration and distortion of old simplicities and cultural excellences which once bore witness to the common religio-philosophic inspiration of the distant past."

The collection includes "Lamas and Druses", "Persian Zoroastrianism and Russian Vandalism", "The Devil's Own—Thoughts on Ormuzd and Ahriman", "Progress and Culture", "Antiquity of the Vedas"—from old issues of *The Theosophist* and *Lucifer*.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Dutch Publications

International Study Centre for Independent Search for Truth (I.S.I.S., The Hague, Holland), has published a translation into Dutch of G. de Purucker's *The Story of Jesus*, and an exact reproduction in Dutch of the first edition of H. P. Blavatsky's *The Voice of the Silence*.

Two Additional Theosophical Manuals

Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, has just published, in co-operation with Point Loma Publications, Inc., Theosophical Manual No. 2: *Reincarnation: A Lost Chord in Modern Thought* by Leoline L. Wright. It is a softbound edition, 128 pages, \$2.25. It has been a pleasure to work with TPH, Wheaton, in this co-publishing project. Point Loma Publications also announces publication of Manual No. 1, *What Is Theosophy? A General View of Occult Doctrine* by Charles J. Ryan, paper, 86 pp. \$2.25.

Lehrer und Schüler

Under this title *Der Theosophische Pfad* (published bi-monthly by Theosophischer Arbeitskreis, Unterlengenhardt, Germany, Mary Linné, editor), in its Nov.-Dec. 1974 issue translates the article "Teachers and Disciples" published in *The Eclectic Theosophist*, No. 14. This was the Foreword of commentary by the Editors of *Theosophy* (U.L.T., Los Angeles) to one of their series of booklets of articles by H. P. Blavatsky on the general subject of discipleship. Other articles in this number are one on Karma by Erika Golz (part of a symposium given at the 1974 Büdingen Convention), one on the aura in nature and man by Rudolf Nicklisch, and an extract from *The Mystery-Tale of Jesus the Avatara* by G. de Purucker.

Rare Old Point Loma Periodicals

Isis Books (5924 Hardy Ave., San Diego, Calif. 92115) has on sale copies of *The Theosophical Path* with reproduction of Reginald Machell's mystical painting 'The Path' on its cover and the artist's interpretation printed on the back. The magazine earned an international reputation in its day with articles on Theosophy, art, religion and the sciences, by outstanding contributors. Among these were H. P. Blavatsky's personal pupils, Herbert Coryn, Fred J. Dick, Reginald Machell and Henry T. Edge; the well-known scholars G. de Purucker, Professor Osvold Sirén of Stockholm, Fritz Darrow, Ph.D., Harvard, W. Y. Evans-Wentz, William E. Gates, and many others.

The price per copy (with Machell's painting on cover) \$1.25
(without Machell's painting) \$1.00

A Valid Frame of Reference

Dr. Joseph M. Backus of the Department of English, University of Hawaii, in the *Journal of the American Society of Psychical Research* (April 1974), writes with commendable insight of H. P. Blavatsky. On page 214 he says: "For this reason, one more biographical study of Madame Blavatsky, no matter how 'scholarly', would serve little purpose unless it can consider her within a frame of reference more nearly like that which may have been her own."

CONTRIBUTIONS

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POINT LOMA PUBLICATIONS, INC.

Current Publication List (All paper except #)

By G. de Purucker

H. P. Blavatsky: the Mystery, 258 pp.	\$4.95
Wind of the Spirit, 282 pp.	3.25
Golden Precepts: a Guide to Enlightened Living, 192 pp.	3.00
# (also hardcase)	5.00
Clothed With the Sun: The Mystery-Tale of Jesus the Avatâra, 45 pp.	1.00
The Mahatmas and Genuine Occultism, 73 pp.	1.50

By Henry T. Edge

Esoteric Keys to the Christian Scriptures; and The Universal Mystery-Language of Myth & Symbol, 96 pp.	2.50
Theosophy and Christianity (Theosophical Manual No. 12*), 80 pp.	2.00

By Geoffrey A. Barborka

Glossary of Sanskrit Terms: and a Key to their Correct Pronunciation, 76 pp.	1.25
Tape recording of above on reel	4.00

By Leoline L. Wright

After Death—What? (Theosophical Manual No. 5), 92 pp.	2.25
Reincarnation: A Lost Chord in Modern Thought, 122 pp.	2.25
(Theosophical Manual No. 2)	

By G. W. van Pelt, M.D.

The Doctrine of Karma (Theosophical Manual No. 3), 64 pp.	1.75
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By Charles J. Ryan

What is Theosophy? A General View of Occult Doctrine, 92 pp.	2.25
(Theosophical Manual No. 1)	

By Iverson L. Harris

Mme. Blavatsky Defended, 174 pp.	3.00
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By Lydia Ross, M.D. and Charles J. Ryan

Theosophia: An Introduction, 64 pp.	1.75
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By Nils Amneus

Does Chance or Justice Rule our Lives? 98 pp.	2.00
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*Other Theosophical Manuals of the complete set of 12 are soon to be published. Please write for dates of publication and full information.

Correction

In Newsletter No. 24, Sept. 15, 1974, page 3, under the heading "From W. Q. Judge to Henry T. Edge", under 1 (c), second line, the word "karmically" was erroneously printed instead of "kâimically".